St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church A Community of Faith for 241 Years Sunday, December 14, 2025



1185 Summer Hill Road, Auburn, PA 17922

Pastor: Rev. Marie Meeks, Cell: 716-353-1610

Church Office Phone: 570-754-7350

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9am–2pm; Closed Friday

Church Email: stpaulsummerhill@gmail.com **Website**: www.SummerHillLutheran.org

Facebook: St Paul Lutheran Church, Summer Hill

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Third Sunday of Advent Holy Communion *stand +kneel

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE....."Of The Father's Love Begotten" arranged by Gilbert Martin

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P - Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

C - Amen.

P - Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

- P Long-expected God,
- C we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.
- P God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. + You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

C - Amen.

*GATHERING SONG..."Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn" (ELW 242)

1 Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.

Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing.

Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,

he opens wide the heav'nly door and lives now inside us forever.

- 2 To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing, his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing; music to heal the broken soul and hymns of lovingkindness, the thunder of his anthems roll to shatter all hatred and blindness.
- 3 In darkest night his coming shall be, when all the world is despairing, as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.

 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in wonder, the weak be raised above the strong, and weapons be broken asunder.
- 4 Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though dark the winter and cheerless, the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless.

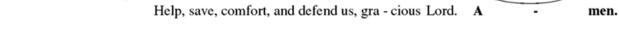
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story; may God fill ev'ry day we share and bring us at last into glory.

*GREETING

During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

- P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C And also with you.

*KYRIE (ELW p. 138) In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer cy. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



*CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW p. 139)

let us pray to the Lord.

Lord,

have mer - cy.



*PRAYER OF THE DAY

The presiding minister leads the prayer of the day.

P - Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

P - Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C - Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly

and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;

the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,

nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there,

but the redeemed shall walk there.

- ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
- R The word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

"Christ Be Our Light" (Verses 1 - 3)

Christ, Be Our Light



PSALM: Psalm 146:5-10 (please read responsively)

- ⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help, whose hope is in the | LORD their God;
- ⁶ who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that ¹ is in them; who keeps promis- ¹ es forever;
- ⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to | those who hunger. The LORD sets the | captive free.
- 8 The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who $^{\mid}$ are bowed down; the LORD $^{\mid}$ loves the righteous. R
- ⁹ The LORD cares | for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way | of the wicked.
- 10 The LORD shall | reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah! R

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

- ⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.
- R The word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 142)

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

*GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

- P The holy gospel according to Matthew.
- C Glory to you, O Lord.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,

who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

P - The gospel of the Lord.

C - Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY....." "All Earth Is Hopeful" (ELW 266)

1 All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last! Furrows lie open for God's creative task: this, the labor of people who struggle to see how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.

2 People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:

"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";

she conceived him, "God with us,"

our brother, whose birth
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.

3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared; new highways opened, new protocols declared. Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace! All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!

4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib. This same Lord Jesus today has come to live in our world; he his present, in neighbors we see our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.

*APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

+PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

P - In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

P - God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. God of grace,

C - hear our prayer.

P - When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. God of grace,

C - hear our prayer.

P - When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. God of grace,

C - hear our prayer.

P - When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. God of grace,

C - hear our prayer.

P - When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant. God of grace,

C - hear our prayer.

P - As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith. May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. God of grace,

C - hear our prayer.

P - Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

C - Amen.

*PEACE

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.

P - The peace of Christ be with you always.

C - And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

The assembly is seated.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

*PRESENTATION OF OFFERING

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" (ELW 884)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*OFFERING PRAYER

P - Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

C - Amen.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

- P The Lord be with you.
- C And also with you.

- P Lift up your hearts.
- C We lift them to the Lord.
- P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE (ELW p. 144)

P - It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 144)



*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P - Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty. When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy. At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace. Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son. Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

C – Amen.

*LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The presiding minister may address the assembly in these or similar words.

P - Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

The assembly may be seated. The bread may be broken for the communion.

*COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 146)



COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

P - The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. and each person may respond

C - Amen.

*TABLE BLESSING

The presiding minister says a table blessing, and the assembly responds

P- The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C-Amen.

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P - Let us pray. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C - Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

P - Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are *sick*, *homebound*, *and imprisoned*. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C - Amen.

*BLESSING

P - May God who comes among us, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

C - Amen.

*SENDING SONG....."People, Look East" (ELW 248)

1 People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.People, look east, and sing today-Love, the Guest, is on the way.

- 2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.

 Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flow'r may flourish.

 People, look east, and sing today-Love, the Rose, is on the way.
- 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim, shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.

 People, look east, and sing today-Love, the Star, is on the way.
 - 4 Angels announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth. Set ev'ry peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming. People, look east, and sing today-Love, the Lord, is on the way.

*DISMISSAL

P - Go in peace. Keep awake.

C - Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE....."People Look East" arranged by Dale Wood

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One vase of flowers is in honor of Glenn Miller's Birthday presented by his wife Helen.

Please sign the Friendship Register in your pew. Visitors, or members with a change of address, please complete the address section and telephone number. Visitors may also include the name and address of your home church so they can be notified that you have received communion.

Prayer Requests – Please email or call the church office with your prayer requests. First names only will be used in our worship service that is livestreamed. You may also give names to the person leading service prior to the start of the service.

Faithful Fellowship- A time of fun, fellowship and yummy treats will be held TODAY following the worship service. We hope you can join us!

The Mitten Tree will be in the narthex during the Advent and Christmas seasons to accept donations of mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, socks, etc. After the Christmas season, these items will be donated to Schuylkill Women in Crisis and Servants to All.

Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24: Join us for a 6:30pm musical prelude followed by the 7pm worship service. The service will feature candlelight and the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Helping Harvest donations will take place the first weekend of every month. This organization has put food trucks in areas to help the needy in place of the closed Pottsville Soup Kitchen.

Pastoral visits and home communions are available at any time. Please call the church office at 570-754-7350 or Pastor Marie at 716-353-1610.

Reminder for hospital visits: The church is not informed by the hospital when someone is admitted. Please call the church to let us know if a pastoral visit is desired.

Attendance December 7, 2025 – 47 in person, 191 online views, 3 shares as of December 10.

The 2025 Weekly giving needed for budget is \$3,166.75.

THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14

Sunday, December 14

9:15am -Sunday School

10:30am - Worship Service

-Faithful Fellowship following worship

Wednesday, December 17

7:00pm -Property Meeting

Thursday, December 18

6:00 PM -Bell choir

Sunday, December 21

9:15am -Sunday School

10:30am - Worship Service

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday, December 15: Psalm 42; Isaiah 29:17-24; Acts 5:12-16 **Tuesday, December 16:** Psalm 42; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Jude 1:17-25

Wednesday, December 17: Psalm 42; Zechariah 8:1-17; Matthew 8:14-17, 28-34 Thurs., December 18: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:1-17; Galatians 3:23-29 Friday, December 19: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:18-22; Galatians 4:1-7 Saturday, December 20: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:23-29; John 3:31-36

Sunday, December 14 – 10:30 AM

Greeter: Pegi Staller Acolyte: Tobias Lileck Lector: Matt Platt Usher: Matt Platt

Communion Assistant: Becki Mairose

Counting Team: Becki Mairose & Matt Platt

Rev. Marie Meeks, Pastor 716-353-1610; Email: preachymarie@gmail.com

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Cindy Brown, Pavilion Sexton 570-345-1279 Stacey Fidler, Church Sexton 570-754-7350 Eva Waldman, Treasurer 570-754-7350

Student Loan Committee email: stpaulsummerhill.studentloan@gmail.com



Keep in your prayers: Richard Paxson, Irene Peiffer, Betty Freeman, Mark Fidler, Helen Runkle, Stephen Curtis, John & Betty Strauch, John Strauch, Jr., Greg Phillips, Jerry Heffleger, Harry Russell, Neida Hayes, Helen Miller, Sheila Tryon, Sallie Ann Sandler, Tonia McKague, Robert & Joyce Zeledonis, Earl & Grace Paxson, Betty Fromm Yarnell, Wayne Brensinger, Ralph Hueske, Shawnette Keller, Brittany Gallagher, Kay & Jerome Hayes, Debbie Toro, Pete and Stacy Smulligan

Those serving in the military: Brandon Felty, Karen Hall, Tyler Weller, Edward Hossler, Nick Lentz, Jake Schaeffer, Scott Aungst, Tyler Wolfe, Michael Hamilton, Mark Weinus, Jr., Jeremy Weaver, Cameron Lutz, Stephanie Boyer, Mitchell Moore, Timothy Bast, and Ryan Bast

QR CODE FOR ONLINE GIVING

